

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated October 26, 2009. In view of the foregoing amendments and following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

By the above amendment, claims 1, 3, 6, 11, 13 and 14 are amended; and claims 2, 8-10, 12 and 16 are cancelled. Thus, claims 1, 3-7, 11 and 13-15 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 11 and 13-15 have been withdrawn from consideration.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised in order to make a number of minor clarifying and other editorial amendments. To facilitate entry of the amendments, a substitute specification and abstract are submitted herewith. No new matter has been added. Marked-up copies of the specification and abstract are attached and entitled "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 2-3 and 6-10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 2. Thus, amended claim 1 and dependent claims 3-7 are clearly allowable.

Further, the Examiner is requested to rejoin process claims 11 and 13-15 because these claims have been amended to include all the limitations of an allowable product claim. In particular, claims 11 and 14 include all of the limitations of allowable claim 2 (now amended independent claim 1); and claim 13 includes all of the limitations of allowable claim 6. Claim 15 depends on claim 13, and is therefore allowable at least by virtue of its dependency.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Shinji MIZUNO et al.

/Michael S. Huppert/

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